



Community-Based Organizations and the Blueprint for Reform

This March, the Obama administration released its blueprint for revising the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which would ask states to adopt college- and career-ready standards and reward schools for producing dramatic gains in student achievement. The proposal challenges the nation to embrace educational standards that would put America on a path to global leadership.

The President's Blueprint for Reform stands on the following key goals:

- **College and career standards.** Raise the standard for every student to graduate from high school ready for college and a career
- **Great teachers and leaders in every school.** A focus on recognizing, encouraging and rewarding excellence
- **Equity and opportunity for all students.** Meeting the needs of diverse learners
- **Raise the bar and reward excellence.** Promote a culture of college readiness and success through a challenging high school curriculum
- **Promote innovation and continuous improvement.** Support, recognize and reward local innovations through new competitive, flexible funding streams

Community-based organizations, both secular and faith-based, are essential partners in the educational achievement of American students, and the ESEA blueprint recognizes that truth. The reauthorization of ESEA will strengthen and support the work of community-based organizations, to expand the learning time and experiences for students, support the full range of student needs, engage families, and foster a community culture of education success. This new support of community-based organizations will boost their engagement and student success.

In addition to fundamental policy changes, the blueprint to reauthorize ESEA includes significant funding opportunities and program advances for community-based organizations:

- **21st Century Community Learning Centers** - \$1.2 billion to provide competitive grants to be awarded to states, school districts, and community-based organizations to leverage models that comprehensively redesign and expand the school day or year, provide full-service community schools, or provide services before school, after school or during summer. Priority will be given to partnerships between nonprofit organizations and school districts for in-school or out-of-school strategies. The grants will increase the participation of community-based organizations, and help eliminate the artificial barriers between expanded learning time efforts, full-service community schools, and after-school programs.
- **Successful, Safe, and Healthy Students** – \$400 million in grants to support states, school districts, and their partners to improve school safety and to promote students' physical and mental health and well-being, nutrition education, healthy eating, and physical fitness. Priority

will be given to partnerships between districts and nonprofit organizations, including community-based organizations.

- **Promise Neighborhoods** – \$210 million in competitive grants to community-based organizations to develop and implement a plan that combines a continuum of effective community services, strong family supports, and comprehensive education reform to improve the educational and life outcomes for children and youth from birth through college and career.
- **Investing in Innovation** - \$500 million in competitive grants to districts and nonprofits to spur and scale up promising and proven innovations in education.
- **Preparing Teachers and Leaders** – \$405 million in competitive grants for states and school districts, and nonprofits partnering with them, to prepare effective teachers and leaders to succeed in high-need schools, subjects, fields and areas.
- **Effective Teaching and Learning for a Well-Rounded Education** – Approximately \$1.15 billion in grants will support States and high-need school districts, who may partner with nonprofit organizations, to strengthen the teaching and learning of literacy, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics,) and subjects that will ensure a well-rounded education. These grants will also support improving access to accelerated coursework for students in high-need schools, as well as programs to support the re-engagement of out-of-school youth.
- **School Turnarounds** – States will receive funding to help turnaround chronically under-performing schools, and will need the support of community-based organizations to ensure those efforts are successful.
- **Parent and Family Engagement** – Parent and family engagement is an issue that cuts across many aspects of the reform blueprint. Community-based organizations will continue to serve critical bridge-builders between families and schools.

A complete copy of “A Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act” is available at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/blueprint.pdf>

The Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships is a lead resource at the U.S. Department of Education for engaging community-based organizations, both secular and faith-based, in education. To contact the Center, email edpartners@ed.gov or call 202-401-1876.